



HALEY BARBOUR  
GOVERNOR

## STATE OF MISSISSIPPI OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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September 20, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Federal Communications Commission  
Room 8-B201  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

From the Reagan Administration to the current Administration, our nation has benefited greatly from interoperable spectrum policy across three generations of wireless technology. First generation analog technology and present generation digital technology differ greatly in capacity and modern applications; but, one significant thread runs constantly through the last thirty years of cellular history. It is this -- all previous commercial spectrum deployments and devices flourished as a result of interoperability. The resulting explosion in cellular communication, competition, innovation, investment, productivity and consumer benefits derive in large part from the ability for networks and devices to have maximum connectivity and functionality.

It is my understanding that this successful and proven interoperable policy is currently at risk. The purpose of my letter is to urge the Commission to move forward quickly to find a workable solution on interoperability for the 700 megahertz (MHz) spectrum. As private companies prepare to build and invest in the fourth generation of wireless broadband networks and devices, I urge the Commission to take the following decisive action: 1) help clear adjacent broadcast channels that interfere and encumber the ability to build and deploy new networks and equipment; and 2) complete action on the rulemaking proceeding (RM-11592) for interoperability for the 700 MHz spectrum.

The benefits of a clear sequential path to 700 MHz interoperability are substantial. A first and doable step is to provide an interoperable solution in the lower band of the 700 MHz spectrum. I encourage the use of a single band class in the lower 700 MHz. With that first step, the industry can then begin to work toward interoperability throughout 700 MHz. This action is both technically and economically feasible.

My home state of Mississippi now has one of the best public safety networks in the country. After the horrible disaster of Hurricane Katrina, federal and state funds of more than \$250 million have been contributed to build a 4<sup>th</sup> generation, LTE network using 700 MHz spectrum. Yet, I fear this network will not be able to realize its full potential in future disasters

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because of the lack of interoperability with both public and commercial networks. Without interoperability public safety would suffer limited access and higher costs for wireless technology. The lack of interoperability would also threaten the ubiquity of the current 911 wireless capabilities and puts at risk the primary means for citizens and first responders to save lives.

Consumers have come to expect interoperability in their wireless devices and rightly so; this is a reasonable and fair expectation of the public. Consumers have benefited greatly from interoperability, being able to roam from one system to the next, and through different regions of the country and the world with seamless service and coverage.

While the historic and present benefits of interoperability are clear, the cost of inaction and continued regulatory uncertainty is unacceptably high in terms of delayed investment, fewer jobs, lost consumer benefits and diminished public safety. The stakes are high and the time to act is now. I urge you to lead the FCC in taking prompt action to resolve this issue.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Haley Barbour', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Haley Barbour

cc: Commissioner Mignon L. Clyburn  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell